

VZCZCXYZ0004  
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBO #2674/01 2062104  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 242104Z JUL 08  
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3755  
INFO RHEHOND/DIR ONDCP WASHINGTON DC  
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL//SCJ2/SCJ3/SCJ5//  
RUEABND/DEA HQS WASHDC  
RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO 9062  
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0096  
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 7074

UNCLAS BOGOTA 002674

SIPDIS  
SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR INL/LP AND WHA/AND

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SNAR](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KCRM](#) [PTER](#) [MX](#) [EC](#) [AF](#) [CO](#)  
SUBJECT: COLOMBIA'S JUNGLAS -- ANTI NARCOTICS POLICE WITH AN  
INTERNATIONAL IMPACT

REFTEL: BOGOTA 1988

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: While recent GOC success liberating the hostages has persuasively demonstrated the enormous operational strides made by Colombian Army intelligence forces, GOC Special Forces proficiency extends beyond the Colombian Army. The Narcotics Affairs Section (NAS) Bogota-supported elite Jungla units (Colombian Antinarcotics Police Commandos) employ dedicated intelligence support and helicopters to interdict large quantities of illegal narcotics and destroy drug production facilities throughout Colombia. The Junglas are often the force of choice for GOC and USG authorities seeking to capture High Value Targets (HVT), such as narcotrafficking and guerrilla leaders. The Junglas have also deployed to help protect high-risk manual eradication operations. USG-supported Jungla international training courses and mobile training teams enhance the professionalization of regional neighbors and important U.S. partners, including Afghanistan and Mexico. The high degree of self-reliance and superb Jungla training regimen make the Junglas one of the Embassy's most effective and nationalized programs. END SUMMARY.

-----  
Internationally Recognized Professionals  
-----

¶2. (SBU) Widely considered to be among the finest Special Forces units in Latin America, over a dozen Colombian and foreign newspapers, magazines, and television programs have profiled the Junglas in the last year alone. The Junglas consist of 500 specially selected and trained policemen divided into three regional companies (Bogota, Santa Marta, and Tulua) and at each location are supported by Colombian Antinarcotics Police (DIRAN in Spanish) assigned aircraft. Jungla tactical equipment, much of it supplied by NAS as part of Plan Colombia, has provided them a distinct tactical advantage over narcoterrorist threats. Jungla individual equipment models those used by U.S. Army Special Forces soldiers, and includes latest generation weapon systems, encrypted communications, and protective equipment to enhance survivability. Jungla personnel also undergo regular human rights training and vetting, both as part of local courses and U.S. training.

¶3. (SBU) Intelligence and air mobility (See Reftel) are key to successful Junglas operations. The Junglas depend heavily on Drug

Enforcement Administration (DEA) and DIRAN- provided intelligence, as well as NAS-supported police aviation assets, to identify and reach otherwise inaccessible narcotics targets. Intelligence officers work closely with the Junglas to screen informants and analyze intelligence to locate cocaine hydrochloride (HCl) labs hidden under jungle canopy and typically holding at least \$500,000 USD in infrastructure investment, plus large quantities of cocaine. Although informants are the most reliable method for locating these remote targets, the DIRAN's C-26 Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) fixed-wing aircraft also contribute significantly to Jungla operations. This aircraft, equipped with infrared and communications intercept equipment, helps develop intelligence prior to each operation. DIRAN's Air Intelligence Analysis Center then uses C-26 generated information to develop target packages for the Junglas. During operations, well trained police helicopter pilots deliver Junglas to the target while the C-26 serves as an airborne command and control aircraft.

-----

Record Interdiction Successes at 2008 Midpoint

-----

¶4. (SBU) Jungla units have grown in both strength and effectiveness in recent years. In 2007, they achieved their highest interdiction numbers to date as they destroyed 62 HCl labs and 821 base labs, while also seizing over 28 metric tons of cocaine and 11 metric tons of marijuana. While 2007 showed very good results, the Junglas may do even better in 2008. To date, the Junglas have: 1) more than doubled 2007 seizures of marijuana to a current total of 25 metric tons; 2) equaled last year's total cocaine seizures of 28 metric tons; and 3) destroyed over 800 combined HCl and base labs. These impressive accomplishments put the Junglas on track to far exceed previous year interdiction results.

-----

The Force of Choice for High Profile Missions

-----

¶5. (SBU) The specialized training, high alert status and inherent air mobility assets of the Junglas make them a natural choice for time-sensitive and complex HVT missions, as well as for protecting vulnerable manual eradicators. Their efforts have helped lead to the capture of leaders of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), National Liberation Army (ELN), Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), and other major narcotrafficking groups in recent years. The Junglas often execute these HVT missions jointly with the Colombian military, and in particular the Colombian Air Force. As the GOC has increased its emphasis on manual eradication, narcoterrorist groups have similarly raised their efforts to counter these operations with mines, small arms, and mortar fire. When manual eradication efforts in Caucasia, Antioquia were struggling due to repeated guerrilla attacks in February 2008, the Junglas deployed to improve the local security situation - a task they successfully accomplished - but at a cost of two Junglas killed and five wounded.

-----

Training for Success and Assisting U.S. Partners

-----

¶6. (SBU) A fifty-man Jungla instructor cadre augmented by a small team of U.S. Army Special Forces personnel run the 18-week Jungla training program. The program focuses on improving Jungla advanced skills and incorporating new technologies and lessons learned from around the world into the training. Jungla instructors are drawn from experienced members of the operational companies and can receive assignments for up to five years before returning to the operational units. Specialized training in the course includes small arms employment, drug lab destruction, night operations, small unit tactics, demolitions, and medical training. Selected Jungla personnel also receive advanced training at the Western Hemisphere

Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC) at Fort Benning, Georgia and at the Inter-American Air Forces Academy (IAAFA), in San Antonio, Texas. Beginning in 2007, the Jungla School opened its doors to international students, training to date 70 students from eleven Latin American countries and Afghanistan. In 2006 and 2007, the Junglas sent Mobile Training Teams (MTTs) to work with U.S.-sponsored Narcotics Interdiction Units in Kabul, Afghanistan and Baeza, Ecuador. The Mexico Police Academy is currently hosting a nine-man Jungla Instructor MTT that is training 60 Mexican policemen through August 2008 in Jalisco.

- - - - -  
A Bright Future  
- - - - -

¶7. (SBU) The Jungla Program is one of NAS's most "sustainably nationalized" programs. USG assistance channels through a single Department of State field advisor who directly works with Colombian National Police commanders to coordinate training, operational assistance, and logistical support. Jungla training is led by their own instructors, operational missions are planned and conducted by their host nation chain of command, and the increasing frequency of joint operations allows the GOC to leverage different service capabilities to accomplish complex missions in the most efficient and effective manner. While USG logistical support is still present and essential, its importance will diminish as the GOC assumes increasing responsibility for these functions in the years to come.

¶8. (SBU) COMMENT: The Jungla program directly compliments the overall USG antinarcotics effort in Colombia, including aerial eradication, manual eradication, and air bridge denial. NAS Bogota expects to deliver three more upgraded C-26s to DIRAN within the next year. The many Jungla contributions to antinarcotics efforts, both in Colombia and on the international scene, demonstrate the high return that this sustained USG investment continues to yield.

BROWNFIELD